

PD-AB4-343

REPORT SUMMARY

ORGANIZATION:	Volunteers in Technical Assistance	DATE: November 30, 2001
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PROGRAM TITLE: Center for International Disaster Information

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT/GRANT NO.: AOT-G-00-00-00113-00

COUNTRY(IES)/REGION(S): Worldwide

DISASTER/HAZARD: All International Natural and Man-Made Emergencies

TIME PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT: May 2001 – November 2001

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objective #1 Donation/Volunteer Management

Efficiently respond to public and corporate inquiries related to unsolicited donations of commodities or volunteer services for international disaster relief efforts. Determination of whether offers are appropriate and/or practical for use by relief agencies. Referrals to the Center are made by USAID and other government agencies, InterAction and many other international relief agencies. These inquiries are received by VITA through the Center's hotline, the web site and by mail.

During the period May through November 2001, the Center, through its web site, posted 738 situation reports from a variety of international relief agencies and distributed nearly 200,000 reports through its disaster listserv. Nearly 280,000 pages of situation report material was downloaded from the CIDI web site, excluding popular documents such as the Guidelines, related articles and the FAQ.

International emergencies during this period included the earthquake activity Peru, the extremes of flooding and drought throughout Asia and Africa, hurricanes and drought affecting Central America and the Caribbean, and the complex emergency in Central Asia.

The Center continued to receive inquiries related to ongoing emergencies. Refugee situations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, throughout West Africa and in the Great Lakes region continued to generate interest from the public. civil strife, along with the AIDS crisis, throughout Africa continues to generate public interest. The ongoing drought affecting Central Asia continues to generate public concern, but mainly from US residents with family still in the region.

Events of the September 11th attacks in New York and Washington led to an increased level of activity for CIDI.

The public inquiry level was moderate during this period.

The program continued its progress in upgrading its web site and voice mail systems.

NOTE: Indicators of success under this objective are directly related to the frequency and magnitude of high-visibility international emergencies occurring during the given period.

Objective #2 Public Education and Donor Awareness Campaign

Develop and promote a public education campaign to educate specific target groups about appropriate in-kind donations for international emergencies.

During this period the Center's staff has either hosted or participated in 28 meetings, (including face-to-face meetings, and teleconferences) the majority of which focused on the issue of appropriate donations for international emergencies. These meetings included the primary targets of Embassy Awareness (Caribbean, Latin American, and Peru specifically) State-level Emergency Management personnel (in cooperation with FEMA), as well as InterAction (particularly for Video/Radio News Release development), and non-InterAction member agencies involved in international disaster relief activities (in cooperation with InterAction and NVOAD). During this period the Center made held corporate, academic and volunteer-recruitment training sessions on international donations management. Conferences included a presentation at the All Hazards Conference with a focus on collaboration with domestic emergency responders. Another meeting, hosted by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce focused on US Government relief and development activities in Latin America.

A representative from the Center was able to meet with new donations program officer at OFDA to brief them on the Center's activities and perspectives related to donations and volunteer issues. OFDA personnel have had subsequent meetings and direct contact with the Center, which has been extremely beneficial in terms of keeping the CIDI abreast of OFDA activities, input into useful components of the situation reports and general support.

Promotional materials, surveys, quizzes and educational materials were added to the Center's web site in an effort to expand the resources available through the Center. Extensive promotion of the program's activities reached targeted audiences through foreign student organizations, University international studies programs, "Sister Cities" and service groups.

Objective #3 Resource Identification and Development

Work with corporations and trade/professional organizations to develop guidelines for utilization of their products/services for use in international disaster relief activities.

The CIDI has initiated a program to establish a forum of communication and action for preparedness, mitigation and prevention activities, through a network of entities in and outside of government circles—corporations, industries, chambers of commerce, Red Cross Societies, U.N. organizations, Private Voluntary Organizations, (PVOs), etc. and the government agencies. Participation in this forum with the subsequent exchange of preparedness information and recovery techniques will provide a powerful disaster recovery tool not only for businesses but for the international community as well.

A database of approximately 300 Fortune 500 corporations, and industries with international subsidiaries is in process. 250 corporation representatives already active in international disaster response activities will participate.

The Center continues to work with Chambers of Commerce members --CIDI will work with the Chamber's Disaster Recovery Assistance Program (DRAP) to ensure that goods and services offered for use in international emergencies are needed and appropriate.

The CIDI has initiated a pilot program to encourage local corporate volunteerism in support of CIDI international activities. These corporations will be included in our international forum of communications and can provide valuable insight on domestic concerns. The CIDI program offers individuals an opportunity to volunteer locally for programs directly related to successful international disaster relief efforts.

The CIDI continues to respond to corporate inquiries related to international disaster relief. The majority of corporate inquiries during this period were related to post-hurricane reconstruction activities in Belize, the possible lifting of the embargo in Cuba following the devastation of Hurricane Michelle and business development and procurement opportunities for reconstruction.

NOTE: The budget submitted and approved for this program is not divided by objective. Therefore, no budget breakdown of expenditures is included in the Executive Summary. A separate budget with a breakdown is attached.

II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

- A.** The overall goal of the Center is to reduce the incidence of the American public's historically poor practice of collecting inappropriate in-kind donations and offering unqualified volunteer assistance for use in professional international disaster relief operations.
- B.** The targeted population and needs identified in the proposal are as follows:
 - 1. Individuals and groups seeking information related to donation and/or volunteer opportunities for international disaster relief.
 - 2. Embassies, consulates, select ethnic populations, state-level emergency management personnel, private voluntary organizations and others requiring guidance in appropriate international disaster response activities.
 - 3. Corporations and professional/trade organizations requesting guidance for having appropriate utilization of their products/services in international disaster relief activities.
- C.** Program activities are primarily targeted to US-based groups and are relevant to all international natural and man-made emergencies.

III. PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

OBJECTIVE # I: CORE ACTIVITIES

A. Public Inquiries Related to International Disasters

- 1. In the period May -- November 2001, the Center maintained its ability to efficiently and effectively handle public inquiries related to international emergencies.
- 2. The public inquiry level was moderate during this period, given the earthquake in Peru, hurricane activity in the Caribbean and a complex emergency in Central Asia. The Center maintained its average for "non-active" public responses at approximately 200 inquiries per month, totaling over 1,200 inquiries for this period.

Nearly a quarter of these inquiries normally require follow-up if information is not available through the web site. In all cases, follow-up was made within one business day.

Technology and access to improved communications continues to have an impact on the services of the Center. The Center received international inquiries from Central Asia and Central/South America.

International emergencies during this period included the earthquake activity Peru, the extremes of flooding and drought throughout Asia and Africa, hurricanes affecting Central America and the Caribbean, and the complex situation in Central Asia.

The Center continues to receive inquiries related to ongoing emergencies. Refugee situations in Afghanistan/Pakistan, throughout West Africa and in the Great Lakes region continued to generate interest from the public. Civil strife, along with the AIDS crisis, throughout Africa continues to generate public interest. The ongoing drought affecting Central Asia continues to generate public concern, but mainly from US residents with family still in the region.

The events of the September 11th attacks in New York and Washington led to an increased level of activity for the Center. These activities primarily focused on addressing commodity and monetary donations for the relief effort—and handling misdirected calls intended for either FEMA or State-level emergency management personnel. In support of our colleagues in the domestic relief arena, the Center posted relevant donations information on the CIDI web site.

Approximately half of the inquiries received during this period continued to be of a general nature -- job/volunteer opportunities in international disaster relief, transportation requests for goods to be

sent to both non-disaster and disaster-stricken areas and information related to sales of equipment and services for use in international disaster relief.

The Center continues to encourage qualified individuals and relief commodity distributors to register through the Center's data base. An increased level of participation in disaster-related meetings and conferences that have led to valuable networking opportunities are detailed under Objective #2. The Center maintains a list of qualified, available volunteers as temporary staff and continues to recruit new highly-qualified individuals.

New informational pieces are available through the web site, particularly those that support the Center's mandate for appropriate international disaster response.

A survey developed to garner public opinions related to international disaster relief to date reflects attitudes previously expressed to the Center's personnel in response to past emergencies. A corporate survey is also available online. On-line, scoring quizzes to reinforce principles of appropriate donations management, international disaster relief volunteerism, corporate concerns (promoting PMP) and general disaster-related issues are now available on-line.

The Center continues to monitor the number of situation reports and other materials distributed through the Center's listserv.

Training and Recruitment of Volunteers.

Working toward a goal of 200 trained customer-care volunteers, bi-weekly in-house training sessions to date have provided 58 skilled volunteer responders to the CIDI hotline during an emergency. CIDI conducts training sessions at the center office as well as off-site organization providing the volunteers. Outreach and training activities outlined below provided the majority of trained recruits for the Center's hotline operation.

Human resources representatives from state and local government offices have expressed an interest in participating in the Center's training programs. University professors and social services agencies in the Washington, DC area have invited CIDI staff to conduct on-site training sessions.

Station WAMU 88.5 FM has agreed to broadcast the CIDI's request for customer care volunteers on their excess time schedule at no cost to the CIDI.

Free advertising space has also been donated by a local newspaper, for the Center to advertise for volunteers for the hotline operation.

3. All targets were met under this objective. The Center has responded to all public inquiries received in a timely manner, and continues to make enhancements to its web site and public inquiries service.

B. CIDI RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

EARTHQUAKE IN PERU

On June 23 an earthquake measuring a magnitude of 8.4 on the Richter Scale struck southwestern Peru. The earthquake caused damage across the provinces of Arequipa, Ayacucho, Moquegua, and Tacna and was felt in neighboring countries of Bolivia and Chile. Damage estimates topped \$20 million for the region immediately affected. Upon receiving notification of the disaster, CIDI Director immediately contacted Ambassador Carlos Alzamora, Embassy of Peru, to offer guidance in managing the public response to this emergency. The CIDI worked closely with the Embassy's Political Counselor, and was able to provide information and guidance used by the Embassy's Emergency Committee, a group established by the Embassy and coordinated by the Peruvian Consulate. Guidelines were transmitted to Ambassador Alzamora in both English and Spanish. CIDI reviewed the text of a public message posted on the Embassy's web site to assure accuracy. Activities recommended by the Emergency Committee were then coordinated by the Peruvian Consulate.

Ambassador Alzamora expressed his appreciation to the CIDI in his letter to the Director:

"I want to express my deep appreciation for your valuable cooperation and knowledgeable advice on how to best handle the generous offers of support that we received from the American people and from the Peruvian community. Your prompt and experienced counseling helped us to avoid inappropriate in-kind donations and to make possible a most effective and useful method to alleviate the suffering of our victims. I congratulate you on your mission to provide assistance to Embassies and I wish you success in this program."

(See Attachment B)

BELIZE -- HURRICANE MICHELLE:

Hurricane Iris, a category 4 hurricane, hit southern Belize on Monday 8th October, 2001. Between approximately 8.30-10pm, the Maya communities of the Toledo District experienced the brunt of its 145 mph winds, as houses were ripped apart, trees split in two or torn out at their roots. Preliminary accounts suggest that at least 8,000 Maya villagers out of approximately 16,000 in the Toledo District are currently homeless. Some of the villages are completely destroyed. Most have sustained serious structural damage. People are living out in the open in inclement weather. The crops – rice, corn etc. – are destroyed, and most livestock is dead or missing. The rivers are contaminated, and water and food supplies are running out. People are cold, wet and hungry, and there are reports that flu, colds and diarrhea are developing amongst the population. No reports of casualties so far, though some people are missing, presumed dead.

One of the first calls received by the CIDI was from Mr. Steve Tullberg of the Indian Law Resource Center in Washington, DC. Mr. Tullberg asked for assistance in securing assistance for one of their programs working with the impoverished Mayan Indians affected by the storm. The Center immediately contacted the Indian Law Resource Center's consultant, Emma Caddy, who works closely with one of their clients, the Toledo Maya Cultural Council. ("Toledo" stands for the Toledo District, the southern district of Belize.) Emma provided preliminary information seeking assistance in acquiring CB radios desperately needed in Belize.

After several exchanges of information between Ms. Caddy and the Center, it was clear that both the equipment and technical expertise to procure and establish a communications system was already available within Belize, and the strategy evolved to a fundraising effort for the purchase and installation of equipment. An excerpt from the text of the project's fundraising document demonstrates an understanding of the donations issue—and the influence that the CIDI's program can have at the local levels in disaster-stricken areas. The Center is working to assist the program to secure the needed funding to meet the programs needs for communications, housing and agriculture.

"...The main Maya organizations of the Toledo District – the Toledo Maya Cultural Council, the Ke'kchi Council of Belize, the Toledo Alcaldes' Association, and the Toledo Maya Women's Council have all been collaborating for some time on issues of common interest to the Maya villages of Toledo. They intend to use their 20 plus years experience in the voluntary sector to coordinate and maintain the current effort to alleviate the suffering faced by the Maya of southern Belize. They are setting up a command center in their joint office in Punta Gorda town, from which to coordinate the relief effort through the Maya leaders of each community affected – the village alcaldes and chairmen. Donations of the specific items listed above would be much appreciated. Nevertheless, for our supporters abroad, since all these items can be obtained in Belize, it might be more practical for them to send cash contributions."

CUBA -- HURRICANE MICHELLE

At the request of Miami-based Radio Marti official, the CIDI director assisted in research and development of Spanish-language, Cuba-specific hurricane preparedness and post-disaster technical materials for broadcast on Radio and Television Marti in the wake of Hurricane Michelle. While the Center was able to find a wide variety of disaster preparedness materials in Spanish, little was available to support populations like the very poor in Cuba, with extremely limited access to flashlights, batteries, materials to secure roofing and windows.

CAYMAN ISLANDS—HURRICANE MICHELLE

While situation reports available to the CIDI tracked Hurricane Michelle through Jamaica, on to Honduras and Belize and over Cuba, none of the reports included information relating to damage caused in the Cayman Islands. The government of the Cayman Islands, on their own initiative, provided the Center with photographs and damage assessments for its records.

BELIZE HURRICANE

Hurricane Iris struck Belize in early October. Per standard procedure, the CIDI contacted the Embassy of Belize to offer assistance following the emergency. After attending the CIDI-hosted Embassy briefing, the representative from the Belizean Embassy contacted the center in order to share their government's relief plans, damage assessments and a request for assistance in promoting responsible public response to the emergency.

US TERRORIST ACTIVITIES

The CIDI's ongoing work with domestic emergency responders led to a minor role in assisting in the wake of the September 11th bombing of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The Center provided back-up information resource assistance to the general public, mostly through mis-directed calls relating to the emergency. At the request of the FEMA donations manager, the Center posted relevant contact information for relief agencies involved in the emergency response. The Center was marginally involved in discouraging collections of inappropriate donations being collected in relation to this emergency.

AFGHANISTAN

As U.S. military operations against targets in Afghanistan continue, and with winter approaching rapidly, large numbers of Afghans are seeking refuge both within Afghanistan and in neighboring countries. Those that are leaving the country will be joining the 3.7 million refugees that have left Afghanistan in previously because of civil war and severe drought conditions. The U.N. has called the situation a humanitarian crisis of stunning proportions. The CIDI has been responding to an increased level of inquiries in response to this emergency.

Many of the initial inquiries for Afghanistan have been related to clothing and blanket drives throughout the United States. While the Center has received many calls, the CIDI is pleased to report that it has been successful in preventing massive collections in California (3), Florida (2), Georgia, Illinois, North Carolina and Vermont.

In the case of Vermont, representatives of the State Department referred the Vermont State Senator Jefford's staff to CIDI for a response to their request. The Senator's staff was looking for a distribution center to receive their new and used clothing collected by the Vermont Boy Scouts for Afghan refugees. They had already arranged for "cow-skin" motif boxes to be donated by Dell Computer, which they had hoped would be dropped from military aircraft in a manner similar to the food drops. The CIDI Director explained the ramifications of such an action to the Senator's staff, directed them to the Donation Guidelines listed on the CIDI Web Site to recommend a more appropriate outreach project to the Boy Scouts. After two follow-up calls, the Senator's representative agreed with the Center's protocol and stated that he would encourage the Boy Scouts to participate in fundraising activities instead.

In another instance, a woman in Illinois, who characterized herself as an "unrelenting do-gooder," contacted the Center requesting transportation assistance for a planned used blanket drive. She insisted that the program, which would be called "Stop the Cold War—Blankets for Afghanistan," was a project she was determined to pursue. After a series of e-mail communications (which spanned over the period of a week), the CIDI addressed this individual's various questions about international donations policy. One of her most recent communications stated:

"Thank you so much for your lengthy and informative e-mail. Every single thing that you listed had already crossed my mind...I thought about cleanliness and disease and weather proofing for travel and etc., etc. including the safety of the items while they are being stored so that someone doesn't hide something unintended inside. How easy it would be for example to smuggle drugs, for example, if the blankets had to be held in storage waiting for...whatever...) I so envy the fact that your "job" is to help people, (although my

life story is the envy of many.) I have tried to figure out a way to do your kind of work myself but at this point in my life it would involve some pretty bold choices. ...All of this is to say that I admire the work you do. I thank you for taking the time to write to me so extensively. And I WILL think of something to do here."

Sandy Bergeson
Itasca, IL 60143

In the end, it was extremely fulfilling to know that the Center has made another successful 'conversion.' Ultimately Ms. Bergeson decided to support Church World Service's Family Shelter Kit program for Afghanistan.

According the CWS's web site, the Family Shelter Kits include a tent, one ground sheet, one plastic tarp, and four blankets (or quilts), and cost \$90 each. The supplementary food rations include beans, rice, wheat, cooking oil, sugar, and tea, and cost \$256 for a family for 6 months.

In addition, the CWS literature explains, that some 400 Afghan refugee women in Pakistan will earn a small income in a CWS-sponsored project to make 60,000 quilts for distribution to refugee families. CWS is using 20,000 of the quilts in Family Shelter Kits. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF are purchasing the other 40,000 quilts for use in their emergency programs.

Ms. Bergeson is now sharing her knowledge about in-kind donations for international emergencies with others interested in pursuing similar projects in order to convince them that supporting agencies on the ground is the best method of response.

Emergency supplies vendors have always been interested in disaster situations. The Center has registered a wide variety of companies wishing to sell such items as medical equipment, blankets, water filters and food items.

OBJECTIVE #2 PUBLIC EDUCATION AND DONOR AWARENESS

Public Outreach – Communications and Information Systems Management:

1. Administration and maintenance of CIDI WebPage, Listserve, Information Distribution and Maintenance; CIDI website has been populated with relevant information and links maintained on a current basis. Technology upgrade has been provided for more fully featured voice systems now available for the disaster response hotline. The charts below describe the number of pages downloaded as well as the number of subscribers who have used the CIDI service.
2. During the period May through November 2001, the Center, through its web site, posted 738 situation reports from a variety of international relief agencies and distributed nearly 200,000 reports through its disaster listserv. Over 280,000 pages of situation report material was downloaded from the CIDI web site, excluding popular documents such as the Guidelines, related articles, and the FAQ.

TOTAL NUMBER OF OF PAGES DOWNLOADED

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Disaster	7,141	4,193	8,691	7,368	9,491	9,287	15,923
Locust	352	244	260	434	318	247	311
Wildfire	11,558	15,307	20,917	28,527	18,152	17,305	14,653
Humanitarian	12,143	10,950	12,709	13,391	12,927	12,209	14,612
Total	31,194	30,694	42,577	49,720	40,888	39,048	45,499

TOTAL NUMBER OF SITREPS

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
SITREPS	51	77	82	82	55	91	90
Subscribers	360	360	360	360	370	370	370
Listserv Out	18,360	27,720	29,520	29,520	20,350	33,670	33,300

4. **Curriculum review:** Promotion of comprehension and understanding of the elements related to disasters and the humanitarian conditions involved, was successfully effected during this period by providing an on-line review of school curricula which are specializing in disaster and/or humanitarian issues. This section will be updated as new resources become available.
5. **Surveys:** A series of surveys were provided on the website to sample public perceptions in disaster circumstances. A quiz designed to engage the corporate community has been prepared and will be posted shortly. Excerpts of the public opinion survey related to international disaster relief are attached. (See Attachment C).
6. **Quizzes:** Four quizzes were created and posted as instruments of focus to educate the public on appropriate donations already collected or planned for an emergency.
7. **Frequently asked questions (FAQ's)** regarding donations, corporations, and relief work in the field are also listed.
8. **New Resources:** The CIDI now also posts the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Weekly Round-up" giving up to date information on current emergency situations.
9. **Relevant articles:** The Center now posts links to relevant print articles that support the CIDI mission as related to commodities donations and sales, as well as volunteer/employment in international disaster relief.

A. PUBLIC OUTREACH -- MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, TELECONFERENCES, ETC.:

EMBASSY BRIEFING -- LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

On October 18, 2001, the CIDI in coordination with the American Red Cross, co-hosted a briefing for embassy personnel from Latin America and the Caribbean. The purpose of the briefing was to provide embassy representatives from the region with guidance on how to avoid many of the common problems and challenges of handling the American public's offers of assistance following a major disaster in their country.

Along with the Center's Director, Suzanne H. Brooks, the briefing panel participants included:

Yolanda Jacot, Embassy Liaison, American Red Cross
 Lesley Schaffer, Manager of the International Disaster Response Unit
 Patricia Bittner, Disaster Preparedness Programs, Pan American Health Organization
 Tony Stitt, Disaster Response Unit, InterAction
 Glenda Alvarez, Vice President, Salvadoran-American Association of Virginia
 Michael Marks, Team Leader, United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance.

Presentations included information related to international disaster response by non-governmental and international organizations, the United States government, the general public and local communities responding to emergencies in their home countries.

The briefing's special guest speaker was Ambassador Rene Leon Rodriguez of the Embassy of El Salvador, who made an insightful presentation on the Embassy of El Salvador's past donations management experience. Ambassador Leon's presentation was particularly valuable to the attendees as it related to lessons learned from managing donations in response to Hurricane Mitch in 1988 and how those lessons were implemented in the Embassy's response to the earthquakes that devastated his country in early 2001.

Ambassador Leon has graciously offered to support the CIDI's Embassy Awareness program and participate in future Embassy Briefings dealing with international donations issues.

More than 20 embassy envoys attended the briefing, including representatives from Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Venezuela, and the United Kingdom for the Cayman Islands and Bermuda.

This embassy briefing was the first in a series of collaborative meetings to be initiated by the CIDI to provide Washington-based embassies and consulates within the United States with guidance in handling public response to international emergencies. In the Center's experience, effective embassy

communication with the American public is key to appropriate, manageable and ultimately successful public response for international emergencies. The Center has worked closely with most embassies affected by large-scale emergencies since the program began in 1988 and in conjunction with the promotion of the American Red Cross Embassy Emergency Response Guide in 1989.

Six embassy representatives have contacted the Center since the briefing to request assistance in developing plans for handling public response in the event of an emergency.

GREATER MIAMI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE -- FOLLOW-UP TO THE SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

In May, the CIDI's Director was invited to participate in a briefing session for the business community in Miami. The briefing was held at the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. Presenters during this briefing addressed both State Department and USAID activities relating to recommendations set forth in the recent Summit of the Americas. The CIDI representative discussed the realities of post-disaster business opportunities in the region, and encouraged support for disaster preparedness activities as an opportunity for initial involvement.

While in Miami, the CIDI representative also met with representatives from the Cuban-American community. Of particular interest to this group, was public response in the event of a change in leadership in Cuba and the development of guidelines in preparation with such an event. The Center continues to work with these groups to reinforce the importance of planned and appropriate response in the event of such an occurrence.

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

On November 7, 2001, CIDI Director, Suzanne H. Brooks participated in a panel discussion hosted by the Society for International Development Crisis and Transition Workgroup. The subject of the Meeting was "Effective Donations Management in Domestic and International Disasters". Representatives from the U.S. government agencies, international relief agencies, private voluntary agencies as well as NGOs, and financial institutions engaged in international development activities. The session explained why donations management in all kinds of disasters is critically important. Graphic examples were shared in terms of the negative impact on affected countries of waste and chaos that an uncontrolled flow of inappropriate goods and services has on a disaster stricken community. An outline of the steps that different parts of society in the U.S.—NGOs, federal government, State and local governments, foreign embassies, expatriate communities, the private sector and the general public, can take to reduce this problem which hampers the actual recovery process from a disaster.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

The CIDI's Director made a presentation to State and Local Emergency Management personnel regarding Appropriate International Donations Issues for the 1st International all Hazards Conference in Orlando, Florida on August 6-7. Participation on the panel supports the program's objective in educating state and local emergency management professionals about appropriate international disaster relief issues. Representatives from FEMA and the American Red Cross also participated in the panel discussion.

FAIRFAX COUNTY GOVERNMENT

CIDI conducted its first training session at Fairfax County Government Center on October 4, 2001. Purpose of the session was to educate Fairfax County employees about the appropriate in-kind donations activities for international disaster relief, and to add any interested volunteers to the CIDI roster. Twenty-four Fairfax County Human Resources and Social Services supervisors from the various County Offices participated. Experienced human resources personnel, involved in county domestic customer care services for a large international population discussed with the CIDI staff the intricacies and similarities of appropriate donations after an emergency. All supervisors will advise their staffs and the CIDI request for volunteers was disseminated to county offices. Also, twelve of the supervisors signed up at the presentation.

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Human resources representatives from area universities have agreed to collaborate in recruiting university students as customer-care volunteers. CIDI conducted an onsite training session at George Mason University's Center for Service and Leadership on November 12, 2001. The CIDI traditionally has worked closely with university-based foreign student groups and international studies programs throughout the United States. This was the first event held on a university campus for students pursuing careers in services and leadership. Twenty-six students attended the two-hour training program, "Managing Public Response to International Emergencies". A lively question and answer session with role-playing exercises followed the training. Student participation was gratifying and sixteen students signed the volunteer sheet.

Assistant Director of the Leadership Program, Heather Hare, expressed her appreciation to the CIDI Director and commented: *"...the intense student interest was directly related to the unique ability of the CIDI staff to communicate its message. You are communicating some very important information."*

The CIDI staff was invited to perform another training during the Spring Semester of 2002.

HUNGER BANQUET 2001

CIDI staff participated in the George Mason University's Hunger Banquet 2001, a university activity organized to help students and guests "visualize the unequal distribution of food throughout the world." Approximately one-hundred students and guests shared the experience. The curriculum stressed the importance of education, advocacy and outreach elements of change. The students were encouraged to become involved in community-based initiatives that will provide economic empowerment and improve the lives of the less fortunate. Along with the Center for Service and Leadership professors and students, private voluntary organization participants attending were the Center for Service and Leadership, Center for International Disaster Information, Oxfam America, Food for Others, Arlington Food Assistance Center, Capital Area Community Food Bank. Key in this activity was the CIDI's ability to impart the differences in addressing worldwide hunger issues from the highly-specialized needs of disaster victims in terms of feeding programs.

Professor Lisa Gring-Pemble, of George Mason University's Century College invited CIDI staff to conduct a training session as part of the freshman curriculum in March 2002.

SISTER CITIES, INTERNATIONAL

After a series of phone consultations, Sister Cities International has requested a CIDI training session for its headquarters staff in the Washington, DC area. The organization has agreed to work with the CIDI to promote appropriate international donations from within the agency, with several hundred participating partner city members around the country. This will clearly have a positive impact on the success of the CIDI's targeted audiences.

VIDEO NEWS RELEASE

CIDI continued to work with the American Red Cross and InterAction to develop the Video News Release on International Donations for the public. Work is in the final decision stages for the publication of the proposal for bidding to begin for vendors to compete for the contract.

Initial research into the development and promotion of a Public Service Announcement yielded estimates of \$300,000 to \$500,000 – and requiring a lead time of over a year. After a great deal of research by the representatives involved—and a reassessment of the objectives to be obtained by developing an educational piece, it was decided that a Video/Radio news release would be a preferable option. The selection of a production company with the capability and expertise to produce, promote and track the Video and Radio news releases in both English and Spanish has been narrowed to two contenders.

The next step will be to secure funding for the release as well as approval from InterAction's Donations Working Group.

AP INTERVIEW

As a leader in international donations management, the Center for International Disaster Information (CIDI) was quoted in a recent article by the Associated Press. The article, entitled "Disaster Relief Groups Say Send Money," describes a recently-released guide to educate the American public about responsible giving in response to international emergencies. The guide is being promoted by InterAction, a coalition of relief, development and refugee agencies. Along with Jim Bishop, Director of InterAction's Disaster Response Unit, and Neil Frame of Operation USA in Los Angeles, the CIDI's Director, Suzanne H. Brooks was also interviewed. (See Attachment D)

B. MEETINGS WITH OFDA

During this reporting period representative had three meetings with OFDA representatives. Two meetings were held as part of the Donations Intelligence Group (DIG) meetings which were previously held on a monthly basis. A third meeting was attended in relation to programs in Latin America.

OFDA personnel responsible for international donations issues have changed several times in the period for which this report covers. The CIDI is grateful to Eileen Simoes and Anita Menghetti who provided necessary support and guidance in the interim.

The CIDI will meet with the new Director of OFDA Program Office to brief him on CIDI activities as soon as convenient after he arrives.

INTERACTION DONATIONS WORKING GROUP

As described in the section of this report detailing outreach activities, the Center continues to work closely with InterAction staff in the development of a Video and Radio news release promoting responsible giving in response to international emergencies. After many months of planning, activities related to this effort are beginning to take shape. The final selection of a production company will allow the primary participants in this endeavor (InterAction, American Red Cross and the CIDI), to pursue funding. Once funding has been secured, the group can then present its plans to the InterAction Donations Working Group for their input.

FEMA DONATIONS COMMITTEE

The CIDI Director continues to participate in regularly scheduled conference calls with the FEMA donations committee to discuss state-level and domestic relief agency issues related to donations. The CIDI representative continues to stress that the objective of the State Emergency Manager's involvement in international relief activities should focus on disseminating the message regarding inappropriate donations, and NOT to start soliciting donations of 'good' donations.

While domestic agencies have done an excellent job in handling the deluge of in-kind donations in response to the September 11th attacks, it clearly has provided many state and local responders with first-hand experience in dealing with overwhelming public response in cities rarely affected by disaster.

DONATIONS INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE (DIG)

Due to the changes in OFDA staff and absences during the summer, the DIG meetings had been temporarily suspended. It is hoped that these meetings can resume in early 2002. The DIG Committee holds a monthly meeting of representatives from the CIDI, OFDA, FEMA, InterAction, the Red Cross and when possible an invited guest. The purpose of these meetings is to share information of potential problems and successes regarding international donations issues or to take advantage of an opportunity to educate a potentially problematic 'relief agency' through interfacing with a number of experts in an informal setting. Meetings are hosted through a rotation of the roster.

VOAD -- Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

In July the CIDI representative met with several NVOAD representatives involved in their donations management activities to ensure that international donations management issues remain in the forefront of the Committee's agenda.

EMBASSIES/CONSULATES:

Descriptions of Embassy Contact (Embassy of Peru and Embassy Briefing for Latin America and the Caribbean, and Belize) are described above.

STATE-LEVEL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

State Donations Coordinators:

With the support of the FEMA Donations Specialist, the CIDI continues to participate in regularly-scheduled conference calls with state-level emergency management managers to address the issue of in-kind donations for international disasters. The CIDI has enlisted their support in discouraging the collection of donated materials.

The state-level representatives all seem to understand the Guidelines—and many of them have adopted the CIDI guidelines in their own donations policies—FEMA and the State of Florida have adopted the VITA Guidelines practically verbatim.

Interest by domestic emergency responders in being involved in international activities beyond discouraging in-kind donations continues to be problematic.

With the United States' first experience with terrorism on its own turf, the critical interest by domestic responders is now clearly focused on domestic preparedness and response issues at the State and Local levels. While the emphasis appears to be in developing workable response plans, some states have expressed interest in developing plans for handling in-kind donations.

- B. By completing the activities described above, the Center has met all of the target indicators under Objective #2.
- C. There were no unforeseen circumstances to delay completion of the objectives under this section.

OBJECTIVE #3 RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

To develop guidelines in cooperation with corporations and professional/trade organizations for appropriate utilization of their products/services in international disaster relief activities.

AIRLINE REPORTING CORPORATION

Airline Reporting Corporation, Inc. (ARC), headquartered in Arlington, VA, provides a wide variety of airline and travel related services to travel agents and the airline industry. There are over 250 employees in the Washington area alone, from a long list of countries around the world. Many are bilingual and have traveled extensively, and have an experience and interest in events around the world. CIDI has conducted a series of small group training sessions and to date has graduated 16 ARC employees as customer-care volunteers during an emergency. They have demonstrated an impressive capacity for grasping the concepts taught in the CIDI training sessions.

ENTERPRISE AUTO RENTAL

On November 12, 2001, the Center for International Disaster Information conducted an on-site training and volunteer recruitment session with Enterprise Auto Rental, Inc.'s Division Managers and Human Services supervisors at their Alexandria Virginia headquarters. This CIDI session was designed to provide insight into the complexities of international disaster relief, and to encourage local corporate volunteerism in support of CIDI international activities. The Enterprise corporation permits employee volunteerism during traditional work hours as part of their local community outreach program and their volunteers are quite selective. Therefore, CIDI competed for the attention of five Enterprise Managers along with volunteer coordinators from Joy of Sports and Northern Virginia Family Services. The Managers will submit the information from all presenters to their staffs for individual consideration and selection. CIDI was the only presenter invited by Enterprise Manager, Timothy Sager, to return to Enterprise to join with United Way at their next presentation in December.

GREATER MIAMI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(See description above under Outreach Activities)

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DATA REQUEST

In the course of developing a response to the recent hurricanes in Central America, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce contacted the CIDI in order to find historical information on damage and relief agency response to previous hurricanes in Latin America and the Caribbean. The report, compiled by the CIDI, provided information on which the Chamber could base its recommendation for member response in the region.

ENGAGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

1. CIDI has initiated a program to establish a forum of communication and action for preparedness, mitigation and prevention activities, through a network of entities in and outside of government circles—corporations, industries, chambers of commerce, Red Cross Societies, U.N. organizations, Private Voluntary Organizations, (PVOs), etc. and the government agencies. Participation in this forum with the subsequent exchange of preparedness information and recovery techniques will provide a powerful disaster recovery tool not only for businesses but for the international community as well.
 - A database of approximately 300 Fortune 500 corporations, and industries with international subsidiaries is in process.
 - 250 corporation representatives already active in international disaster response activities will participate.
 - Representatives from the regions of Central America and the Caribbean already active in emergency relief activities are also included.
 - Chambers of Commerce members --CIDI will work with the Chamber's Disaster Recovery Assistance Program (DRAP) to ensure that goods and services offered for use in international emergencies are needed and appropriate.
 - Private Voluntary organizations and, non-governmental agencies engaged in emergency relief activities, will be contacted.
 - Representatives of U.S. government, United Nations, Red Cross, Pan American Health Organization, international relief agencies, humanitarian agencies, etc., engaged in on-going emergency activities will provide their expertise.

- CIDI has initiated a pilot program to encourage local corporate volunteerism in support of CIDI international activities. These corporations will be included in our international forum of communications and can provide valuable insight on domestic concerns during an international emergency. The first training activity was conducted on-site at Enterprise Auto Rental, Inc. Enterprise has an active volunteer program that permits employees to volunteer during traditional work hours. The CIDI program offers individuals an opportunity to volunteer locally for programs directly related to successful international disaster relief efforts.
- Airline Reporting Corporation, Inc. (ARC) is supporting the CIDI program with CIDI trained corporate employee volunteers to provide basic information on commodities and personnel management for international emergencies. To date sixteen ARC employees are forum participants.

CORPORATE INQUIRIES

Corporate offers of assistance during this period were mainly companies seeking business opportunities in disaster-stricken countries. Several offers of assistance turned out to be requests for field tests of experimental medical and engineering equipment.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Center continues to work with the Yale School Medicine in developing a solid program for opportunities in disaster relief. The School continues to refer interested students to the web site for information and inquiries related to relief activities in the field.

IV. RESOURCE USE/EXPENDITURES

Expenses during this period were generated mainly for personnel costs and modest equipment purchases and services in support of the Center.

During this period, Anne C. Bradley joined the CIDI as its Deputy Director on a part-time basis. Ms. Bradley brings extensive USAID and overseas experience to the program, having worked in Asia and Africa. Ms. Bradley was also instrumental in the success of the USAID-funded International Disaster Advisory Committee's program for private sector involvement in disaster preparedness, mitigation and prevention issues.

Please see attached budget report.

ATTACHMENT A – BUDGET

ATTACHMENT B – LETTER FROM EMBASSY OF PERU

EMBASSY OF PERU
1700 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036

Washington D.C. July 25th, 2001

Ms. Suzanne Brooks
Director - International Disaster Information Center
VITA
1600 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 710
Arlington, Virginia 22209-8483

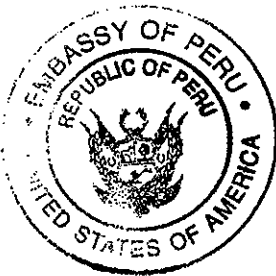
Dear Ms. Brooks,

I would like to refer to your kind letter offering your assistance to manage the response of the public regarding donations for the earthquake that hit Peru on June 23 this year.

I want to express my deep appreciation for your valuable cooperation and knowledgeable advice on how to best handle the generous offers of support that we received from the American people and from the Peruvian Community. Your prompt and experienced counseling helped us to avoid inappropriate in-kind donations and to make it possible a most effective and useful method to alleviate the suffering of our victims.

I congratulate you on your mission to provide assistance to Embassies and I wish you all the success in this program.

Very sincerely yours,



Carlos Alzamora
Ambassador

ATTACHMENT C -- SAMPLE CIDI SURVEY RESULTS

FROM THE CIDI PUBLIC DONATIONS SURVEY...

SELECTED RESPONDENT'S COMMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL DONATIONS AND THEIR OWN PREFERENCES FOR INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE:

"I think it is more important to give ongoing support to a few effective international organizations, than to respond only to major catastrophes. Sometimes it seems that agencies use disasters as just a general money raising tool."

"Greater effort should be placed on helping relief professionals in disaster-prone countries to better respond to emergencies on their own." is your best line."

"Being a rescue specialist, trainer. But also former Canadian Military personnel I have seen disaster around the world. My biggest frustration was to see goods donated by people around the world, being wasted or used by the wrong people. The time donation is my solution to this frustration, I would still like to be paid to do my work, since my family and company bear the cost of me playing..."

"You hear so often of the relief materials being stolen or hijacked. I would like to see better security for the relief organizations. I wish you could write checks to organizations without them selling your name to other charities. I like anonymous donation at church."

"I have not been involved in such disasters clearly because of my age, this time with the WTC disaster, I can not be much help because I don't have much, and I would help physically try to recover victims, but they have professionals to do that I guess, I'm sure if I just walked up they'd tell me to go home or give blood."

"Is it possible that the US thinks it is responsible for the entire world in a pushy kind of way. Perhaps we should be offering our help through local channels in the countries affected and let them be in charge of most of it. I think we often appear to be intervening and high-handed in our efforts at times and could easily destroy the motivation and self-worth of the affected people but saying. We know you have a disaster and need help, but we think only we are the ones capable of dispersing it. We should take a more back seat and offer our help and supplies but not butt in so hard."

"The main concern should be that ALL of the donations, whatever get to the intended people and places. 100% if you are helping others as a volunteer then you should not expect compensation should not be an issue, and that has been a big issue."

"I would like to say that I think it is a shame that more people do not contribute more often not just when there is a large need for it. I feel that if every one would donate anything time, money, or what ever they could."

"There is no time like the present to teach people (not preach, just teach if its possible). Population growth seems to be a common thread to a lot of the world's disasters. Living in flooded areas, having to build buildings without the resources to make them fire or earthquake resistant."

"I think that in a time of crisis everyone should help each other. Whether we are from the country of crisis or not. I do think that with recent events in the USA that if a country is known for terroristic residents no one should help those people at all."

"Hi Suzanne, I am employed by an international NGO so have had the benefit of your educational efforts over the years! ;-)"

"We continually help these people, however, they seem to forget real fast when America needs their support! It is also hard to tell that the money donated will not go into the pockets of someone along the way not getting to where it is needed. when I donate goods, I always ensure it is to the ACTUAL victims or to the emergency response workers, only because after working for Red Cross, I see some abuse."

"...giving my time and expertise is more valuable, I have also seen the donation in goods process. The waste is just amazing. They were wasted in warehouse, molding and controlled locally by mob's, religious group, or other bedly intentioned group training locals to respond, help each other, mitigation effort. Agency should coordinate relief expertise, training. Providing locals with paid expert instead of providing just cash."

"There should be more opportunities for individuals and groups in major countries to help disaster victims."

"I don't want to be put on mailing lists for every agency under the sun."

"I know we have so much where others have so little."

"I believe it is a privilege to help others in need."

"Often it is my church that has information and a plan to help."

"I prefer to go through a church or non-profit like that where the monies are not eaten up in salaries. Some groups get as little as 5% of the donations to the actual victims and find ways to "use up" the rest."

"Helping the countries local people help themselves is the best. Give a man a fish and he eats for today. Teach him to fish and he eats for all days."

"Take care of home first - many starving and (im)poverished here. Then we can worry and help other countries in there problems."

"Shoe boxes filled with small items for children for Christmas gifts!"

"I feel poor(its all relative)and appreciate that people might help me."

"Getting to see that the supplies made it to their destination. having information that the supplies were useful."

"The world needs more education- on population control, on living in flood plains, on removing native vegetation..."

"[I receive information on where to donate from...] on the news when they say send donation to the following...."

"As a member of an International Incident Management Team I have seen truckloads of useless items donated and later taken to landfills, trucks of ice, frozen solid and useless."

"Large intl corporations could play an important role, but they also have to be educated to not 'dump' equipment/products on these countries, such as occurred with telecoms equipment after Mitch

"I have personally seen misappropriations."

"I am sole wage earner in household and support 2 on \$300/week, donations in kind are easier to give than donations in cash."

"I normally don't donate following an event but instead on a yearly basis through payroll deduction."

"Giving cash to a proven organization provides many benefits and is easy to transport to the disaster area."

"Other counties need to step more aggressively to the plate."

ATTACHMENT D -- AP ARTICLE

News From A.P.

The New York Times

HOME

CLASSIFIEDS

Find a Job
Post a Job
Find a Home
Personals
All Classifieds

NEWS

International
National
- Columns
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Corrections

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Editorials/Op-Ed
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August 28, 2001

Disaster Relief Groups Say Send Money

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Filed at 9:19 a.m. ET

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Some Americans must think hurricane victims need high heels or that people facing famine due to drought might appreciate a parka.

Those are just a couple of the goodhearted but misguided donations offered when disaster has struck.

In an effort to clear up misconceptions, an international disaster assistance coalition just released new guidelines to educate Americans about donating suitable materials and assisting disaster victims.

Jim Bishop, of the Washington-based group InterAction, said the guidelines were changed because people sometimes hinder relief efforts in their attempts to help.

"Appropriate giving is a minefield if it's not done right," said Neil Frame of Operation USA in Los Angeles. "You don't want your disaster response to be part of the disaster."

Frame said the most inappropriate items people can send are food, clothing and their personal medicine. He said people have sent, or tried to send, expired antibiotics, avocados to Mexico City and T-shirts to people in blizzard-stricken countries.

"One agency got cocktail dresses and high-heeled shoes to help disaster victims in Honduras," Frame said.

Cash is best because it can be used for anything, the groups say. It's also efficient and it supports the economies of disaster-stricken areas. And cash doesn't require transportation or cause cultural, environmental or dietary problems.



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"A lot of people think giving cash donations is cold," said Suzanne Brooks of Volunteers in Technical Assistance in Arlington, Va. "They get caught up in their emotions. It makes them feel better, but that is not necessarily the best thing for the disaster victims."

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InterAction, the nation's largest coalition of relief, development and refugee agencies, includes the American Red Cross and CARE. The 160 members have to follow criteria about what the cash will spent on.

The guidelines, which are on InterAction's Web site, recommend that if people still choose to donate materials, they should contact an established relief organization before collecting anything. The guidelines advise asking about the quantity and types of goods needed and about shipping methods and costs.

The Web site also suggests different uses for donated goods, such as giving materials to local charities operating in non-crisis areas, or having yard sales and donating the proceeds to a disaster relief organization.

Bishop said InterAction plans to tape video news spots that the media can use during disasters to inform the public about how they can help. He also said they hope to get the message across in church bulletins.

"It's not that the process has gone askew; we are just trying to rebuild it," said Bishop. "The American public is very generous. We want to help people shape their response so it is the most effective possible."

^-----

On the Net:


InterAction: <http://www.interaction.org/disaster/guide.html>

Volunteers in Technical Assistance: <http://www.vita.org/>

Operation USA: <http://www.opusa.org/>

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